

**Silver Spring Transportation Management District Advisory Committee
(SSTMD AC) Meeting Summary
July 9, 2009**

Item 1, 2 – Introductions/Agenda Review and Minutes Approval: **Jim Polk** made note of a date correction for June's minutes to the 11th. **Sande Brecher** asked members to identify their comments in the minutes where the speaker is not identified. Minutes were then approved and seconded with changes.

Item 3 – Chair's Comments: **Mr. Polk** discussed the Council Management and Fiscal Policy (MFP) subcommittee hearing that he attended with **Jim Carlson** and **Ms. Brecher** on June 29th. Committee discussion touched briefly on Bills 20-09 & 21-09, introduced by Councilmember Leventhal, seeking to discontinue the SSTMD Advisory Committee. **Mr. Polk** stated his belief, based on remarks from the three Councilmembers on the MFP subcommittee (**Chair Duchy Trachtenberg**, **Nancy Navarro** and **Valerie Ervin**), that there was little subcommittee support on the bill and MFP will most likely make a recommendation to council not to discontinue the SSTMD AC. **Ms. Brecher** explained that the subcommittee makes recommendations to full Council, which will then take a formal action. **Mr. Carlson** stated that he is still waiting for **Councilmember George Leventhal's** response to the Advisory Committee's letter of May 14th, recommending against disbanding the AC.

Mr. Polk commented on **Councilmember Floreen's** bill (Bill 17-09), recommending that Parking Lot District funds be used for funding transit into the PLD. He recommended that the committee review its position on the issue because of the strong union support for Bill 17-09 and also **Ms. Floreen's** persistence in its passage. He believes the issue will come back sometime in the fall.

Mr. Polk announced to the committee the issue of frequency of meetings. **Sgt. Tom Harmon** commented that he believed monthly meetings are not necessary because they are time consuming and we seem to go over the same topics. **Mr. Carlson** stated that some committees meet quarterly and he did not think there were specific requirements for meeting frequency and would look into the matter. The only issue then becomes the attendance policy, which County policy would dictate. **Ms. Brecher** stressed that in the past, when committees have met less frequently, attendance became a major issue due to major segments of committee work being missed.

Ms. Brecher raised the issue that, in light of **Mr. Leventhal's** proposal, we need to begin the process of brainstorming about better ways SSTMD Advisory Committee members can advise the County to better manage the TMD, and what County staff can do to support the committee in that advisory capacity.

Mr. Polk replied that deciphering what is needed from the committee regarding this matter has been a key issue and less frequent meetings may increase the quality of the meetings. **Ms. Brecher** explained that the different TMD Advisory Committees meet according to what works for them. For instance, the FHTMD AC had less frequent meetings at first but switched back to monthly meetings because they needed more interaction; however, the Friendship Heights TMD

is not as mature as Silver Spring so less frequent meetings for Silver Spring may work. A committee member added that if the format was changed to bi-monthly meetings, 30 minutes should be added to the meeting time [adjourn at 10 a.m. vs. current time of 9:30]. **Ms. Brecher** reiterated the importance of regular attendance due to the need for a quorum in cases a vote is needed.

Samantha Mazo suggested that emailing members when a vote may be likely or an issue is of particular urgency, such as the **Leventhal** bills, may help with attendance issues. **Mr. Polk** suggested that new members be given an orientation about the SSTMD AC, which would provide clear expectations about attendance. **Ms. Brecher** said a Power Point orientation for new members might also help with this.

Andrew Wexler said he thought the committee should expand its scope to include more regional issues. He suggested inviting the National Capital Transportation Planning Board, part of the Council of Governments (COG), to come and speak to the committee; and to have the District DOT give an overview presentation on the DC Metropolitan Bike Trail which is planned to terminate at the Silver Spring Transit Center. He also suggested WMATA come and talk about the Metro rail system.

Mr. Polk asked **Ms. Brecher** and **Mr. Carlson** to make a list of issues they think the committee should consider and also for committee members to think about changing the meeting frequency.

Sgt. Tom Harmon said the committee should have people come to the board who can make the changes that are discussed at the meetings. **Ms. Brecher** reminded the committee that this is an advisory and not a decision-making body. The Advisory Committee's purpose is to advise government entities such as DOT, M-NCPPC and the Urban District. One avenue is through formal communication such as letters, because officials are required to respond in writing. **Mr. Polk** added to **Sgt. Harmon's** comments, suggesting that the committee communicate with those agencies that the committee has not traditionally connected with to find out their positions on certain issues and, likewise, communicate issues that the committee believes important. For example, Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) could brief the committee on construction project updates. **Ms. Brecher** mentioned a matrix had been used in the past to keep track of committee issues and projects affecting the TMD.

Mr. Segerman stated his concern that less frequent meetings may mean not providing adequate time to issues. **Ms. Brecher** stated that for advisory committees to become more knowledgeable in transportation demand management perhaps a segment of time could be devoted to educating members on the elements of transportation demand management.

Mr. Carlson discussed inviting **Stephen Petruccelli**, recently retired WMATA General Superintendent of Bus Operations, to speak to the committee. **Mr. Petruccelli** maintains his relationship with WMATA personnel and has brought in current superintendents of the Western and Montgomery County divisions to speak to the Friendship Heights TMD Advisory Committee.

Mr. Polk announced that he completed his position with the committee in June. **Martin Atkinson** from M&T Bank will be nominated by the Greater Silver Spring Chamber as his replacement. He stated there will be an election at the end of the meeting for a new committee chair. **Mr. Polk** stated he will attend September's meeting to assist with the transition.

Item 4 – Councilmember Leventhal Response: **Mr. Carlson** stated that there was no reply as of July 8th to the Advisory Committee letter of May 14, 2009, opposing the Councilmember's recommendation to discontinue the committee.

Item 5 – Updates: **Sgt. Harmon** briefed the committee on new county regulations regarding the parking of commercial and recreational vehicles on public property, effective July 1, 2009. The County Council limited the parking of commercial vehicles in residential neighborhoods. This also applies to large recreation vehicles; in some cases residents will have to pay for storage of their recreational vehicles. **Ms. Mazo** asked if vehicles could be parked in residential driveways. **Sgt. Harmon** said yes, but this is also subject to code enforcement based on the weight and length of the vehicle.

Sgt. Harmon reported that June traffic enforcement activity is down due to rainy weather and the need for additional personnel used to direct traffic when the power is out. The County is installing back up batteries for traffic lights. **Ms. Brecher** asked which agency was responsible for the project. **Sgt. Harmon** said he did not know specifically; however, he did know that **Bill Porter**, who is now retired, was heading up the project.

Sgt. Harmon also reported that the Police Department was involved in directing traffic after the June Metrorail accident. Seventy additional busses were added to the affected routes. He stated that Ride On and Metro did well with traffic flow with only one minor pedestrian strike. At the monthly Interim Operations Site (IOS) meetings **Sgt. Harmon** stresses that bus drivers need to exercise extra caution in the IOS, be aware of blind spots, take care during turns.

Sgt. Harmon said that the Police Department picks a problem roadway each month to issue citations to increase safety and decrease speeding. This month's citation effort yielded 198 citations on Spencerville Road, because the department was getting many complaints of speeding. This was also the scene of County Executive Leggett's traffic accident. Next month's focus will be University Blvd.

Mr. Segerman, in reference to the Colesville and Second Avenue intersection, wanted to know what could be done about giving citations to pedestrians that walk in the intersection, preventing cars from making right turns. He suggested a 'Don't Block the Box' sign be installed, in response to **Sgt. Harmon's** assertion that citations could not be given to pedestrians unless there was a sign in clear view. **Sgt. Harmon** said that **Emil Wolanin**, Chief, DOT Division of Traffic Engineering and Operations, is the person with the authority to put up the sign; there are also surveillance cameras at major intersections used to identify traffic problems.

Ms. Brecher suggested that the committee make a list of SHA concerns.

Mr. Segerman asked **Sgt. Harmon** if Maryland State or Metro Transit Police ever help the county with traffic enforcement. **Sgt. Harmon** said the State Police do not have enough personnel to help the County, and the County has to help State Police due to the shortage. Metro Police are rarely seen.

Ms. O'Steen said that 70 companies were notified that their Traffic Mitigation Plans are due.

Mr. Segerman, in reference to the A²CE Awards, asked why was Zalco Realty was recognized when the company is not in compliance with a TMP.

Ms. O'Steen said that Zalco was given a Partnership Award for its help in allowing access to its employees. **Ms. Brecher** agreed and stated that Commuter Services is working to bring Zalco into compliance.

Mr. Polk stated that giving awards to companies that are not in compliance lessens the value of recognition to the other companies that receive awards which are in compliance, regardless of what the award is for.

Ms. Brecher said that she understood these concerns and will take that into consideration in the future. CSS wanted to recognize Zalco's efforts, and waiting for the company to be in compliance would not have given them enough time to issue the award. **Ms. Brecher** suggested for a future agenda item the committee brainstorm award criteria.

Ms. Brecher said the A²CE Awards events went very well and thanked all who attended. She explained that the ceremonies were done on a smaller scale - one for each of the TMDs; there was also a write up in the Gazette newspaper (included in the meeting packet). DOT Director **Arthur Holmes** and Transit Services Chief **Carolyn Biggins** attended the events. Feedback from all of the events was that the smaller venues worked well because they provided for better networking and accessibility to the DOT Director and Transit Services Chief. **Ms. Brecher** said that the committee should discuss future award events, when and how they should be held - annually, biannually or on a grand or small scale. **Ms. Brecher** stated that though the smaller events worked well, she was not sure it would always be possible to secure the participation of the DOT Director or Transit Services Chief.

Ms. Brecher informed the committee about the news coverage concerning environmental issues regarding construction of the North County Transit Center. She referenced a Washington Post article highlighting the Ten Mile Creek watershed study and stated that the County Council and Maryland National Capital Park & Planning Commission (MNCPPC) increased the 4 percent impervious surface requirement. This change may impact North County Construction, which has already been downsized from 250 to 120 buses. **Ms. Brecher** said that North County construction and Corridor Cities Transitway should be future agenda items and monitored equally with the Purple Line issue. Although both projects are north of the CBD, they will have a significant impact on down county transit service and accessibility.

Mr. Wexler asked if there has been a recommendation made on the Purple Line. **Ms. Brecher** said MNCPPC has not taken a final vote.

Mr. Segerman asked about citizens buying natural gas from the County CNG depot. **Ms. Brecher** said she believed they opened one up but would look into it further.

Ed Furgol asked if limited impact drainage, a process that reduces run off, is being considered as an environmentally friendly technology for the North County Depot construction.

Ms. Brecher said she would pass that information on to General Services Contract Director **David Dice**, who has said that DGS is looking into all environmentally friendly technologies.

Ms. Brecher announced that the Friendship Heights TRiPS store is now open, but considered a 'soft opening' with no formal announcement. CSS staff is working with the County Executive's schedule to have a grand opening. The store is located at 17 Wisconsin Circle between Potomac Pizza and Eagle Bank. Ms. Brecher also announced that Ride On's new model buses and the new paint scheme for the buses will be part of the TRiPS grand opening event.

The County has received negative feedback about the express bus fare increase from \$1.25 to \$3.00 along the 270 corridor. Riders are upset because there was not enough notice of the change. Metro also raised express bus fares, independent of Ride On. **Ms. Brecher** asked for committee advice on advertising future fare changes.

Jim Carlson informed the committee of upcoming vacancies and the need for elections to replace Chair **Jim Polk** and Vice Chair **Charles Segerman**. **Edward Furgol** is at the end of his 1st term and is eligible for a second term. **Everton Latty** is a prospective replacement for **Julian Leidman**, pending interview. **Suvita Melehy** has been unable to attend regular meetings and will be sent a removal notification due to absences.

Ms. Brecher asked committee members if they knew of anyone who might be interested in the vacancies.

Item 7 – New Chair & Vice Chair Expirations: **Mr. Polk** explained Chair and Vice Chair duties – facilitating at meetings, appearing in front of the County Council and County Executive one to two times per year a term for special actions, and coordinating with staff in setting up meetings.

Ms. Brecher talked about the importance of promoting the activities of the TMD. She said that at the subcommittee meeting Councilmember **Valerie Ervin** stated that not only did the SSTMD AC need to let Council know what the committee does, but also the citizens as well. Ms. Brecher noted that it is optimum if the Chair and Vice Chair are balanced as to representatives from the citizen and business communities..

Mr. Wexler and **Ms. Mazo** were nominated and elected as Co-chairs of the Advisory Committee.

Item 8 – Other Business: **Robin Goudy** mentioned the problem that employees of Social & Scientific Sytems are having with not being able to see traffic when pulling out the parking

garage on to Georgia Avenue. The lack of visibility is attributed to the un-metered parking on Georgia Avenue and wanted to know if this is a committee issue.

Ms. Mazo stated that, in general, issues with building access are between the developer and MNCPPC or State Highway Administration, not the TMD.

Ms. Brecher added that if the situation was impacting the TMD then they would talk to MNCPPC about solutions to solving pedestrian circulation issues.

Christine McGrew, M-NCPCC, said that she would attend future committee meetings when she could and forward any concerns to the appropriate people in Park & Planning.

Ms. Brecher explained that **Chuck Kines**, the previous MNCPPC representative, had changed jobs.

In reference to a question from **Michael Price** about IOS construction updates, **Sgt. Harmon** said that the IOS is waiting for permission from the State to dig 18 feet along Colesville Road to get to a 30 to 40 inch water main pipe; the process will take 60 to 90 days. **Mr. Price** was concerned about fire drills at Discovery Communications during construction. **Mr. Carlson** added that the southbound bus stop on Colesville Road will be removed temporarily during Transit Center construction.

Silver Spring Transportation Management District Advisory Committee (SSTMD AC)
Attendance Sheet
July 9, 2009

Voting Members (12)			
Name	Affiliation	Present	Absent
Chamber Members (3)			
Samantha Mazo	Linowes and Blocher LLP	X	
James S. Polk, Chairman	Technology Service Corporation	X	
Tom Collins	Atlantech Online		X
Citizens Advisory Board Members (3)			
Edward Furgol	Kemp Mill, Four Corners, East SS	X	
Charles Segerman, Vice Chairman	North & West Sector Plan Area	X	
Andrew Wexler	CBD Resident	X	
Employers less than 50 employees (3)			
Julian Leidman (pending replacement)	Small Business Representative		X
Suvita Melehy	Melehy & Associates		X
Cathy Wilde	Solid Waste Assoc. of N. America	X	
Employers with 50 or more employees (3)			
G. Michael Price	Discovery Communications	X	
Robin Goudy	Social & Scientific Systems	X	
Vacant			
Non-Voting Members (4)			
Sandra Brecher, DOT Transit Services	DOT Director or Designee	X	
Shahriar Etemadi	M-NCPPC		X
Sergeant Thomas Harmon	Montgomery County Police	X	
Staff			
Terrie O'Steen	DOT, Commuter Services	X	
Nakengi Byrd	DOT, Commuter Services	X	
Jim Carlson	DOT, Commuter Services	X	
Guests			
Christine McGrew	M-NCPPC	X	
Mel Tull	SS Regional Services Center	X	

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